

ACTIVITY REPORT FOR 2016

EURODIACONIA Presidency

Eurodiaconia took over the Presidency of SSE during the first half of 2016. At the beginning of the year, SSE's work programme (and budget) for 2016 were approved. The work programme aimed to continue delivering on the strategic priorities for the network, such as recognition of the sector, creation of quality employment and decent work conditions in the not-for-profit sector, structural funds, the European Semester, financing models for social services. In light of the latest migrant and refugee crisis, SSE agreed on concrete action to raise awareness of the role played by social services in integrating these groups.

SSE Task Forces continued to be reference units for work on the key issues mentioned above. The task force on **job creation**, led by EASPD, was focused on strengthening cooperation with EU institutions to address staffing issues in the sector. On 12 January, Luk Zelderloo spoke at the EP Social Economy Intergroup public hearing on 'The social economy: creating good quality jobs in Europe'. His [intervention](#) called for reinforced EP engagement on unlock the job potential in the sector, asking the EP to draw up an own-initiative report on actions needed towards that aim.

The task force on **financing social services**, led by CEDAG, re-initiated work on a paper assessing different models of financing social services, which can be alternative to more traditional frameworks; for instance, public procurement.

The task force on **structural funds**, led by EPR, progressed on a paper on 'What opportunities for social services in the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) 2014-2020 Programming period?'. The document showcases examples of good practices and provides general guidelines on the effective use of EU Structural Funds. It is addressed to social service providers, as well as managing authorities, to better understand the opportunities that the ESIF offer in the field of social services.

The **European Semester** task force continued to follow the Semester cycle with specific focus on social services. Following the publication of the Annual Growth Survey, SSE addressed a [letter](#) of response to Vice-President Dombrovskis, with proposals for consideration at the following stages of the European Semester process. On 21 March, SSE received a letter of reply from Mr Dombrovskis acknowledging the key role of social service providers to deliver social investment.

In a context of growing numbers of **refugees and migrants** attempting to reach Europe, SSE members agreed to work on a discussion paper aimed to highlight the key role played by social service providers in the support and integration of migrants. The paper, drafted by Solidar and Caritas Europa, will underline the main challenges faced by social service providers and will include recommendations to create an enabling framework for quality support and integration services to refugees and migrants in the EU.

Heather Roy continued to represent SSE at the **Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship (GECES)** appointed by the European Commission to monitor progress on the measures envisaged in the Social Business Initiative. SSE is integrated in the GECES working group on 'Legal issues for Social Enterprises'.

On 15 February, Laura Jones, Jorge Nuño Mayer and Heather Roy met Ann Branch, Head of Unit on Job creation at the European Commission's DG EMPL. At the meeting, SSE stressed the role of its members as key actors within the social economy and, as such, their potential as job creators.

On 6 June, Denis Haveaux, Conny Reuter and Heather Roy met Allan Larsson, European Commission's Special Adviser for the European Pillar of Social Rights. SSE looked for ways in which social services can deliver on the goals of the Social Pillar and, also, how social services can be supported by the Pillar, which is still under public consultation process.

Under Eurodiaconia's Presidency, the **4Quality** project published its [toolkit](#) with good practices on improving the quality of services and working conditions on personal and household services. The toolkit, where cases among SSE members were represented, drew to a close the 18-month long project.

The [PESSIS 3](#) project, aimed at creating a European network of employers in the social services sector with recognition among European social dialogue structures, was launched on 23 January. Several national meetings have taken place since.

A General Assembly on 23 June approved the activity and financial reports corresponding to 2015.

FEANTSA Presidency

FEANTSA took over the Presidency of SSE during the second half of 2016. We coordinated the further implementation of the work programme for 2016 as adopted under the Presidency of Eurodiaconia. The work programme aimed to continue delivering on the strategic priorities for the network, such as recognition of the sector, creation of quality employment and decent work conditions in the not-for-profit sector, structural funds, the European Semester, financing models for social services. In light of the latest migrant and refugee crisis, SSE agreed on concrete action to raise awareness of the role played by social services in integrating these groups.

SSE organised a hearing in the European Parliament on the issue of reception and **integration of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants**. SSE also published a [statement](#) on the role of social service providers in the support and integration of migrants.

SSE organized a breakfast meeting with ex-Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs and Laszlo Andor 14 December on the Social Rights Pillar and related issues

SSE agreed on the terms of reference and a budget for a study on the **job creation potential** of social services on the basis of a proposal of EASPD.

SSE [contributed](#) to the public consultation on the Social Rights Pillar and focused on the principle related to integrated service delivery.

SSE published [a briefing paper](#) on Opportunities for Social Services in the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) during the 2014-2020 programming period.

SSE wrote a [letter](#) to the EP about the potential suspension of the ESIF for Portugal and Spain announced by the European Commission.

Heather Roy continued to represent SSE at the **Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship (GECES)** appointed by the European Commission to monitor progress on the measures envisaged in the Social Business Initiative. SSE contributed to input to the final general report of GECES.

The [PESSIS 3](#) project, aimed at creating a European network of employers in the social services sector with recognition among European social dialogue structures, was launched on 23 January. Several national meetings have taken place since. SSE discussed and agreed on a workplan for 2017.